DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 364 006 EC 302 575

AUTHOR Wehmeyer, Michael
TITLE Promoting Self-Determination Using the Life Centered Career Education Curriculum.
INSTITUTION Arc, Arlington, TX.
PUB DATE 9 Apr 93
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the Council for Exceptional Children (71st, San Antonio, TX, April 5-9, 1993).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Education; *Curriculum Development; Daily Living Skills; Instructional Materials; Lesson Plans; *Mental Retardation; *Personal Autonomy; Secondary Education; Self Actualization; *Self Determination; Self Efficacy; Self Esteem; Self Evaluation (Individuals); *Student Educational Objectives
IDENTIFIERS *Life Centered Career Education

ABSTRACT

This paper examines issues concerning self determination for people with mental retardation and other disabilities, within the context of the Life Centered Career Education (LCCE) curriculum. It looks at various views of self-determination; offers a definition; and relates self-determination to autonomy, self-actualization, and self-regulation. Aspects of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act dealing with self-determination and transition are considered, as are best practices in promoting self-determination and the educator's role in this process. The paper then addresses the curricular components of self-determination, describing the development of one organization's (The Arc) model of self-determination and a project which resulted in the identification of four LCCE competencies and 17 subcompetencies which focus on developing self-determination skills. The project reviewed relevant LCCE lesson plans, made revisions for greater suitability with secondary students having mild cognitive disabilities, and field tested the materials with this population in a wide range of settings. General guidelines for applying the LCCE curriculum are offered. Finally, the paper addresse training and assessment aspects of applying the LCCE to self-determination instruction. (Contains 26 references.) (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 364 006

Promoting Self-Determination using the Life Centered Career Education Curriculum

A paper presented at the 1993 Annual Council for Exceptional Children Convention
April 9, 1993

Michael Wehmeyer, Ph.D.
Research and Program Specialist
The Arc (formerly Association for Retarded Citizens of the United States)
Department of Research and Program Services
500 East Border Street, Suite 300
Arlington, TX 76010
817-261-6003

EC 302575

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Michael L. Wehmeyer
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).

Promoting Self-Determination using the
Life Centered Career Education Curriculum

In October of 1990, The Arc (formerly The Association for Retarded Citizens of the United States) embarked on a three-year project funded by the United States Department of Education to promote self-determination for students with mild cognitive disabilities. This project worked collaboratively with the Employability Enhancement Project at the University of Missouri-Columbia, (from which emerged the lesson plans which constitute the Life Centered Career Education curriculum). This collaborative effort was initiated to describe and define self-determination, to explore the use of the LCCE materials to promote self-determination and to field-test the applicable LCCE curricular materials to provide educators the information they need to use these materials to promote self-determination for their students. Working with Dr. Donn Brolin, project staff have explored the role of education in the promotion of self-determination, examined best practices in this area and applied the LCCE materials to this end. As a result, educators interested in assuring that their students are fully prepared to assume adult roles can do so using the well tested, field-driven Life Centered Career Education curriculum.

The following chapter begins with an introduction to self-determination. What is it? Why should you, as a teacher or administrator, focus on self-determination? What does the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act say about transition and self-determination? What are best practices in promoting self-determination? What is the educator's role in this process? What non-curricular strategies need to be employed? The chapter then addresses the curricular components of self-determination, describing the development of The Arc's self-determination model and the identification of LCCE competencies and subcompetencies for promoting self-determination. You will be provided with all information needed to effectively implement the LCCE curriculum to promote skills central to self-determination and those which provide additional areas of concentration. Finally, the chapter discusses training and assessment aspects of applying the LCCE to self-determination instruction.

Self-Determination

In its earliest conceptualization, self-determination referred to the inherent right of individuals with disabilities to assume control of and make choices which impact their

lives (Nirje, 1972). Individuals with disabilities have emphasized this interpretation as they demanded equality and access. In 1972 Bengt Nirje, who with Wolf Wolfensberger was integral in bringing the concept of normalization to the United States wrote:

> "One major facet of the normalization principle is to create conditions through which a handicapped person experiences the normal respect to which any human being is entitled. Thus the choices, wishes, desires and aspirations of a handicapped person have to be taken into consideration as much as possible in actions affecting him. The road to self-determination is indeed both difficult and all-important for a person who is impaired" (Nirje, 1972).

Nirje viewed self-determination as more than simply a pedagogic or therapeutic activity. Self-determination referred to an inherent human right, the right to receive respect, the right to human dignity and choice. *Twenty years later self-determination remains as critically important for people with disabilities as when Nirje called for action, and too often as unattainable*. Michael Ward (1988) referred to the attainment of self-determination as a critical--and often more difficult--goal for people with disabilities. Robert Williams (1989) described self-determination as a "life filled with rising expectations, dignity, responsibility and opportunity" and called for people with disabilities to "go home and empower others to become more self-determining in their own lives."

These voices, all adults with disabilities, illustrate a significant element in the definition of self-determination when it refers to people with disabilities. Ultimately, self-determination as a construct must have as its core the empowerment of the individual. Self-determination is not, as Nirje points out, ensured simply by instructional efforts. Self-determination is not just another social skill nor is it simply a set of behaviors that show assertiveness, self-advocacy or problem solving. Thus, in the eyes of many, particularly those Americans who have experienced a disability and the subsequent discrimination associated with that experience, self-determination means empowerment...the right to assume control of one's life.

As fundamentally important, however, as it is to understand the essential relationship between self-determination and empowerment, conceptualizing self-determination strictly as a right does not adequately describe the construct. Individuals have an inherent right *to the opportunity to be* self-determining; the right for free association, freedom of speech and expression, equal employment opportunity, equal protection and due process, freedom from cruel and unusual punishment, the right to marry, procreate and raise children, the right to vote, freedom of religious expression, and the right to privacy (ACDD, 1991). The right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Without these basic civil rights, it is not possible to be fully self-determining. The reality

for many people with disabilities who have been locked up, put away, excluded from employment, paid substandard wages and told what to do and when to do it is that the outcome of being self-determined represents first and foremost access to these basic rights.

We have proposed elsewhere (Wehmeyer, 1992a; 1992b; Wehmeyer & Berkobien, 1991) that for purposes of education, self-determination is best conceptualized as an outcome and described by essential component elements which define self-determination in terms of processes. A process is characterized by gradual changes leading to a particular result or a series of actions or operations conducive to an end. A process orientation removes definitional limitations encountered when prescribing a set of behaviors as self-determining. For example, the enhancement of self-determination for a youth with a disability might focus heavily on his or her IEP process, enabling the student to make choices and decisions in goals and objectives and to assume roles of leadership. For a student in primary school, however, the ability to assume leadership or the capacity to make choices regarding specific content area may be mediated by the child's age and ability to understand longer term outcomes. For both students, however, a focus examining perceptions of control or self-efficacy can provide indications of individual self-determination.

Given the above, we have proposed the following definition of self-determination: ***"Self-determination refers to the abilities and attitudes required for one to act as the primary causal agent in one's life and to make choices regarding one's actions free from undue external influence or interference"*** (Wehmeyer, 1992a; 1992b; Wehmeyer & Berkobien, 1991). Self-determination incorporates the related processes of **autonomy** (acting according to one's own priorities or principals), **self-actualization** (the full development and use of one's unique talents and potentialities) and **self-regulation** (cognitive or self-controlled mediation of one's behavior). These processes provide the foundation for the development of interventions to enhance self-determination.

Autonomy

Autonomy includes the ability to indicate preferences, make choices based upon these preferences and initiate action based upon these selections. It involves acting on the basis of personal beliefs and values, thoughts and emotions and likes and dislikes, instead of exclusively on social norms and individual or group pressures. Autonomy and independence are in many ways synonymous. Turnbull and Turnbull (1985) defined independence as "choosing how to live one's own life within one's inherent capacities and means, and in a way consistent with one's personal values and preferences." Autonomy is

engendered by the experiential knowledge (self-efficacy) that one's behavior can control ones outcomes or the environment (outcome expectancy).

Student competencies specific to the process of autonomy include the abilities to indicate preferences and make choices, identifying likes, dislikes, interests, abilities, beliefs and values, and communicating these. Making choices and decision based upon personal preferences or beliefs incorporates an understanding of others rights and responsibilities and recognizing individual differences in beliefs, preferences and abilities. Students need to learn to identify options and consequences and weight these to determine risk.

Self-Actualization

Self-actualization is a process by which one learns to capitalize upon an awareness (personal self-concept) of one's strengths and weaknesses across multiple characteristics (physical, behavioral, internal) and identities (age, gender, socioeconomic status, etc.) to strive toward and realize one's potential. The person incorporates how these strengths and weaknesses are viewed by others (social self-concept) to establish a sense of self-respect, self-acceptance, personal worth and competence (e.g. self-esteem).

Teaching students with disabilities to achieve self-actualization focuses on student self-confidence and self-awareness. Students need to learn to identify their (and others') physical and psychological needs and emotions. There must be an acknowledgment of individual strengths but also limitations. Students should learn to express feelings of self-worth, describe others' perceptions of them and experience competency and success. To be self-actualizing students should learn organizational skills and how to access services which will allow them to achieve independence without having to rely on others to locate these services for them.

Self-Regulation

Finally, **self-regulation** includes the skills of self-monitoring (observation of one's social and physical environment and what they themselves are doing), self-evaluation (making judgments about the acceptability of this behavior through comparing information about what one is doing with what one ought to be doing), and, based upon the outcome of this self-evaluation, self-reinforcement. A closely related set of abilities involve self-advocacy, which focuses self-regulation toward advocating for one's rights either on an individual or system basis (Wehmeyer & Berkobien, 1991).

To achieve self-regulation, students should possess skills to make adequate decisions, plan and initiate activities and acquire self-advocacy skills. This involves skills necessary to identify and evaluate the problem and alternative solutions, as well as

possible consequences. They need to be adept at identifying resources, planning for desired outcomes and seeking these outcomes.

Like most educational outcomes, becoming self-determined is a complex process involving interacting factors endogenous and exogenous to the individual. Children and adolescents become self-determined adults through opportunities and experiences leading to success, constructive experiences with failure, opportunities to explore, take risks and learn from their consequences and by watching adults take control and make decisions. They learn by participating in decisions, making choices and experiencing control at home, at school and elsewhere. Self-determination emerges when children and adolescents perceive themselves as effective, worthy individuals who can engage in actions which impact outcomes related to their lives. Students become self-determined by learning specific skills such as problem-solving, learning to identify consequences and identifying alternatives.

In order to be self-determined, it is critical for students with disabilities to perceive themselves as having control over outcomes, hold expectations of effectiveness, be aware of unique strengths and needs and establish positive self-concepts and self-esteem. Students with cognitive disabilities are at risk for achieving limited self-determination at least partly because they perceive themselves as lacking control, hold beliefs of helplessness, and do not capitalize on individual strengths to achieve their potential. As a result, these students become adults who do not assume responsibility for choices and decisions, who rely excessively on others to find jobs and secure housing arrangements for them, who do not advocate for themselves and who, ultimately, are not self-determining.

The reasons that this outcome exists are multiple, and it should be emphasized that these maladaptive perceptions and beliefs result primarily from environmental factors over which the child and adolescent has limited control. Clearly, there is an important role for both educational and home environments in the remediation of this problem.

Why focus on self-determination?

There are a number of factors which are driving the current attention to the issue of self-determination. Perhaps the most important factor has been the demands from people with disabilities for choice and self-determination. Many Americans with disabilities have become increasingly active in promoting these issues through the independent living movement, through legislative advocacy and through the judicial system. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is a visible outcome of this

movement, and civil rights legislation such as the ADA will provide a platform for increased visibility for self-determination.

A second variable has been the growing recognition that adult outcomes for students with disabilities are not as positive as educators would prefer. Although youth with disabilities find greater postsecondary opportunities than were available in past years, too many students with disabilities remain un- or underemployed, work in low paying, low status jobs, and are socially isolated (Hasazi, Gordon, & Roe, 1985; Mithaug, Horiuchi & Fanning, 1985; Neel, Meadows, Levine & Edgar, 1988; Wagner, 1989). Studies indicate that students who participate in a vocational experience are more likely to be employed after leaving school than those who did not complete a vocational class and are more likely to graduate from school (Butler-Nalin, 1989; Wagner, 1989). However, results from follow-up and follow-along studies suggest that a focus on vocational and job skills is a necessary step to preparing students with disabilities to succeed in the work world but not sufficient to ensure job success. Similarly, while self-help and independent living skills are important for preparing students to live in less restrictive environments, social skills to community integration and vocational success, and transportation skills for success in most spheres of the adult world, in and of themselves these skill areas are not adequate to function in adult roles in our society. We must look elsewhere for factors which contribute to adult success. One such factor needs to be a focus on self-determination, enabling students with disabilities to make choices and decisions based upon their own values, beliefs, interests and abilities and to assume greater control and responsibility in their lives.

Recent legislative efforts have emphasized this as an important factor. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA), which was the reauthorization of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142), recognized the importance of long term planning and goal setting and interagency collaboration to successful adult outcomes by mandating the presence of transition services in students' IEP plans no later than age 16. IDEA defines transition services to include "coordinated set of activities designed within an outcome-oriented process", which promote movement from school to a wide range of post-school activities. The statutory language goes one step further, however, by stating that "the coordinated set of activities *shall be based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests*" [Section 602(a)(19) - italics added]. Ward, Wehmeyer, Martin & Marshall (1993) suggest that the spirit of this provision is captured not in a narrow interpretation of the language leading to the conclusion that simply assessing student likes or dislikes in a given vocational area will suffice, but instead that

the intent of IDEA is to actively involve students in their educational program. Campeau, Wolman & Mithaug (1992) noted that the seven newly mandated conditions in IDEA "comprise a logical sequence or causal flow beginning with student-determined and defined needs, which leads to IEP's and plans for coordinated service, which result in community-based experiences, that culminate in post-school adjustment" (p. 7). In other words, student choice and preferences based on individual needs, preferences and interests constitute the heart of the new revisions.

IDEA is not alone among major policy initiatives affecting the transition of youth from school to adulthood which focus on issues of self-determination. Kochhar and Deschamps (1992) noted that IDEA must be interpreted as part of a triad of federal initiatives which include The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act (P.L. 101-392) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). They suggested that these three pieces of legislation "cross-reference each other and stand together to develop a broader, far-reaching mandate to include youth with special needs in the range of career/vocational and transition services options." A key element of these acts, say Kochhar and Deschamps, is the participatory nature of their services. People with disabilities must be involved in planning and have access to opportunities present for all individuals.

Finally, recent Department of Education initiatives and a shift to outcome-based educational services have fueled a growing emphasis on self-determination as a critical component of the educational process for all learners, particularly children and youth with disabilities. The Office of Special Education Programs has funded more than twenty model demonstration projects to promote self-determination, as well as research projects to define and assess self-determination. In a recent concept paper, OSEP identified self-determination as one of seven principle aspects of a totally integrated lifestyle (OSEP, 1993). Leaders in the Department of Education have described self-determination as "education's ultimate goal" (Halloran & Henderson, 1990), pointing out that:

> "actualizing this goal would require a major change in our approach to educating, parenting, and planning for children and youth with disabilities. Reform aimed at self-determination would distribute the responsibility for learning and performance as shared among teachers, parents and the student, with primary control remaining with the student" (p. 2).

Education's role in supporting self-determination

Achieving the outcome that students, with and without disabilities, departing the educational system are self-determined will be as complex and difficult as comparable efforts to ensure that school leavers with disabilities are employed or involved in their

communities. It has become increasingly obvious that an educational program which adequately promotes self-determination will not consist of unilateral efforts to simply change curriculum, create peer mentor programs or structure environments. Instead, an effective program to promote self-determination will encompass a host of educational alterations and adaptations as well as parallel emphasis in the student's home and community. Appropriate, functionally derived curriculum, environments which enhance opportunities to experience choice and to express preferences, interactions with peers without disabilities, access to adult role models, experiences with success, and control in decision-making; all contribute to the eventuality that a student will become self-determining.

We have argued elsewhere (Wehmeyer, 1992a, 1992b) that education, and educators, play a critical role in the development of self-determination or the lack thereof. Unfortunately, the latter is too frequently the case. The need to structure the special education classroom to meet educational, behavioral and administrative requirements may result in an environment promoting dependence and limiting choice and decision-making (Ianacone & Stodden, 1987; Lipsky & Gardner, 1989). Ianacone and Stodden (1987) highlighted many educators' tendencies to limit autonomy by rigidly structuring educational environments, fostering dependency and outerdirectedness, as well as the students' limited opportunities to participate in decisions which impact their lives, as barriers to effective transitions. These practices are barriers to effective transition because they are limits to student self-determination.

That such speculation is warranted is supported by the limited research available. Houghton, Bronicki and Guess (1987) determined that classroom staff responded at very low rates to student-initiated expressions of preference or choice during the school day. They concluded that "the majority of observed student initiations in the classroom were ignored by attending staff members" (p. 25). Murtaugh and Zettin (1990), in a longitudinal study of the level of autonomy afforded adolescents with cognitive disabilities concluded that these adolescents lagged well behind their non-disabled peers on measures which looked at responsibility for actions.

The education of students with disabilities must be based upon the unique needs and learning characteristics of each student. Educational programs should reflect those areas which will facilitate post-school success. Examining the current level of self-determination for students and adults with mental retardation and cognitive disabilities, and extrapolating from studies examining adult outcomes for these individuals, it is apparent that there is a need to focus instructional and administrative energies promoting self-determination among students with cognitive disabilities.

Although students with mild disabilities may benefit more directly from instruction in specific skill areas, self-determination is important for all students. For a student with severe mental retardation, self-determination may be manifested by non-verbal behaviors indicative of preference, or via maximal participation in their own self-help activities. For a student with an orthopedic impairment, self-determination may involve advocating for needed or revised services or being allowed to take risks and learn from the experience.

On the other hand, no individual is completely autonomous or self-determining. This is even more applicable when one is talking about children or adolescents. Ryan, Connell and Deci (1985) pointed out that allowing choice and self-determination is not to be equated with the removal of all constraints or structure. Teachers, administrators, parents, related service personnel and the student need to work together to optimize opportunities for self-determination.

Although many skill areas related to self-determination are more applicable to older students, self-determination is not the sole domain of secondary education. Choice making, indicating preferences, self-awareness and confidence involve lifelong experiences and instruction. However, as Ward (1989) has pointed out, adolescence is a critical period for the development of many skills related to self-determination. Adolescents without disabilities begin to question authority, rely upon peers for opinions and advice and generally move toward becoming self-determined individuals. Students with cognitive disabilities are frequently not afforded similar opportunities and experiences, often based upon the assumption that they are incapable of doing so effectively.

Teacher recognition of the importance of skills related to self-determination is a critical step in the process. If not already a focus for educators, there are a number of skills which are essential to being self-determined and which warrant instructional attention. We have addressed these in detail elsewhere (Wehmeyer, 1992a, 1992b) but examples of these include learning how to access resources, communicate preferences, set realistic, achievable goals, time planning and management, problem identification and solving, self-advocacy skills and, for some students, actual instruction on how to make choices.

In addition to the instruction of such skills, the methods and strategies teachers adopt can facilitate the acquisition and utilization of self-determination skills. As will be discussed in detail later, instructional models such as role-playing and self-control are effective methodologies. Such instructional techniques as relaxation training,

metacognitive instruction and brainstorming are typically underutilized with students in special education.

Skills development goes hand in hand with the promotion of attitudes and perceptions critical to becoming self-determined. To enhance motivation and encourage self-determination, teachers need to provide activities which optimally challenge the student. Educators can promote autonomy by supporting the initiation of activities and allowing choice. Of particular concern here is the control orientation of the teacher. Students with cognitive disabilities need to learn that they are causal agents for their own lives. Excessive external control is detrimental to this. Students need to be provided opportunities to express preferences and make choices and then experience the outcomes. Recent efforts have focused on the IEP process as a key element in this process. Students can learn to assume more control and responsibility in their IEP, identifying and prioritizing goals or objectives, and taking a leadership role in the meeting (Martin, et al. 1992).

Gresham (1984) articulated the importance of focusing on efficacy enhancing instruction in special education. He contended that the special education enterprise is built around discovering personal incompetence and remediating these incompetencies. This may have detrimental effects on the child's efficacy expectations and self-determination. Gresham argued that there is a direct relationship between decreased efficacy expectations and learned helplessness in children with disabilities and that experiences of competency are essential for a successful educational experience.

What can educators do to promote expectations of personal competence and efficacy? Generally, successes raise efficacy expectations. However, even within the experience of failure, the perception of progress can lead to efficacy expectations. A primary means of indicating success or progress is through verbal feedback or reinforcement. Deci and Chandler (1986) pointed out that children need to know how they are doing. Positive feedback needs to be administered in a context and a way that is non controlling and honest. Students need to be provided rationales for the performance of activities as well. Finally, teachers should not leave choice to chance. They must plan for ongoing opportunities to make choices.

Action principles for administrators to facilitate the development of self-determination are not markedly different according to deCharmes (1984). The teachers classroom orientation may reflect his or her administrators' autocratic or autonomous orientation. deCharmes suggested that when administrators give no choice or guidance to teachers, too much or too little structure, it leads to classroom disruption and lower motivation. Principals and coordinators can assist teachers by clearing bureaucratic

hurdles limiting student choice and decision-making opportunities or requiring excessively controlling environments.

Finally, the educational process must empower the student and his or her family member to become active members in the educational planning process and enable students to invest in their own futures by taking advantage of educational opportunities. The principle mechanism for achieving this is through the educational and transition planning process. Family members and students must become equal partners in all aspects of the planning process. IDEA now requires that student preferences and interests be a part of the transition planning procedure. Educational personnel must not only reach out to involve parents, siblings and students, they need to set the stage such that real control is shifted to these team members. Educational practices which completely strip the student of the perception of control will serve only to alienate students further from the process and limit self-determination. Perhaps the most flagrant violations in this regard involve the assessment process. The special education enterprise has been built on a deficits identification process where professionals diagnose problems through testing and assessment procedures that rarely try to involve the student as a contributing member and in fact often require that the student remain unaware of the intention of the test. We must move beyond this model to actively involve students and family members in the educational process.

As is illustrated by this brief discussion, education's role in the development of self-determination for children and youth with disabilities is critical. There are curricular, methodological and attitudinal orientations which promote self-determination and which need serious attention from the educational community.

Identification of the LCCE Self-Determination Curricular Areas

Recognizing that curriculum development was the logical first step toward promoting self-determination for students with disabilities, The Arc and the Employability Enhancement Project proposed to collaborate to adopt and field-test the LCCE curriculum to teach self-determination skills for secondary age students with mild cognitive disabilities. Initially, project staff at The Arc engaged in an exhaustive effort to identify what constituted self-determination. We began by interviewing more than 50 adults with mental retardation, asking these individuals what self-determination meant to them and who or what had empowered them to be self-determining. Following this effort, we surveyed adults with cognitive disabilities who were participants in self-advocacy groups around the nations, regarding the choices they had in their work and living environments, their satisfaction with these arrangments and their goals and dreams

for the future. These results (Wehmeyer, 1992b) supported previous findings that individuals with mental retardation had fewer opportunities to make choices and decisions impacting their quality of life.

At the same time staff conducted an extensive review of the educational, psychological and rehabilitation literature regarding self-determination and component characteristics (Wehmeyer, 1992a). These concurrent efforts resulted in a framework, highlighted in the discussion above. It was at this point that project staff and LCCE staff turned to the LCCE competencies and subcompetencies. Based on the extensive literature review and discussions with and surveys of adults with mental retardation, a "model" curriculum was identified. This model curriculum focused on four domain areas which, sequentially, was hypothesized to move students through the processes necessary to achieve self-determination. The four domains were: (1) Self-awareness; (2) Self-confidence; (3) Choice and decision-making skills, and; (4) Goal attainment behaviors. For each domain areas, a list of attitudes and abilities related to this was identified. Armed with this structure, project and LCCE staff examined the LCCE curriculum for its applicability to these areas. A thorough examination of both sources led to the identification of 4 competency and 17 subcompetency areas which matched the structure of the model. These are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

LCCE competency and subcompetency areas used to promote self-determination.

Model Domain	LCCE Competency	LCCE Subcompetency
Self-Awareness	10) Achieving self-awareness	42) Identify physical and psychological needs
		43) Identify interests and abilities
		44) Identify emotions
		45) Demonstrate knowledge of physical self
		61) Awareness of how behavior affects others
Self-Confidence	11) Acquiring self-confidence	46) Express feelings of self-worth
		47) Describe others' perception of self
		48) Accept and give praise
		49) Accept and give criticism
		50) Develop confidence in oneself
Choice and Decision-making	15) Making adequate decisions	62) Locate and utilize sources of assistance
		63) Anticipate consequences
		64) Develop and evaluate alternatives

Goal Attainment	14) Achieving independence	59) Strive toward self-actualization
		60) Demonstrate self-organization
		65) Recognize nature of a problem
		66) Develop goal seeking behavior

Once the basis of the LCCE self-determination areas were identified, project staff turned to another stakeholder group in the educational process, parents and family members of children and adults with disabilities. Family members were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important), each of the curricular areas identified through the initial process and to identify whether their son's or daughter's had received instruction in these areas during their school career. Table 2 provides the results of that survey. It is obvious in examining these responses that issues of self-determination were as important to family members as they were to people with mental retardation. It also appeared that, while certain areas of instruction appeared readily available, other areas needed more focused attention.

Table 2

Response from family member survey to LCCE areas (1 = not important, 5 = very important)

Skill Area	Mean Rank	% Taught/Yes	% Taught/No
Identify likes and dislikes	4.55	48.4	51.6
Identify interests and abilities	4.35	45.2	54.8
Recognize individual differences	4.20	31	69
Identify beliefs/values	3.9	25.8	74.2
Use preferences to make choices	4.42	55.2	44.8
Learn respect for others' rights	4.48	64.5	35.3
Respect authority/follow instructions	4.19	83.9	16.1
Demonstrate appropriate behavior	4.5	61.3	38.7
Recognize consequences of action	4.42	51.6	48.4
Perform risk analysis	3.7	10.7	89.3
Identify physical/psychological needs	4.16	31	69
Identify emotions	4.10	43.3	56.7
Demonstrate knowledge of self	4.23	60	40
Express feelings of self-worth	4.48	48.4	51.6
Describe others' perceptions of self	3.63	20	80

Accept and give praise/criticism	4.19	38.7	61.3
Demonstrate self-organization	4.00	43.3	56.7
Aware of how behavior affects others	3.97	36.7	63.3
Identify community services	3.77	16.7	83.3
Locate/utilize sources of assistance	4.00	23.3	76.3
Anticipate consequences	4.13	32.3	62.7
Develop and evaluate alternatives	3.81	17.9	82.1
Develop goal-seeking behavior	4.03	43.3	56.7
Choose and plan activities	4.10	38.7	61.3
Make leisure choices	4.17	43.3	56.7
Identify job requirements	4.06	45.2	54.8
Job search and interview skills	3.7	24.1	75.9
Identify living arrangement needs	3.86	17.2	82.8
Know civil and citizen rights	3.9	25.8	74.2
Know responsibilities	4.35	41.9	58.1
Communicate assertively	4.16	22.6	77.4
Listening/Responding skills	4.32	67.7	32.3
Demonstrate leadership skills	3.55	16.1	83.9

Finally, the proposed LCCE self-determination areas were presented to and approved by an Advisory Panel consisting of national leaders in the self-advocacy movement for people with cognitive disabilities, family members and educators. Following this process, The Arc's project staff performed a comprehensive review of the first draft of the lesson plans for each of the subcompetencies identified. Suggestions for strengthening the materials to address self-determination were forwarded to the Employability Enhancement Project personnel, who reviewed these suggestions and incorporated them when appropriate. A second review occurred, similarly, with the second draft of the LCCE lesson plans. In summary, then, the framework for the curriculum was developed from extensive discussions with and surveys of adults with cognitive disabilities and an extensive review and synthesis of the professional literature (Wehmeyer, 1992a, 1992b) from which the LCCE curricular areas were identified. This structure was, in turn, validated by family members, adults with disabilities and educators. The relevant lesson plans were extensively reviewed and revised when necessary to strengthen their use for promoting self-determination. The LCCE curriculum presents an educational system designed to provide school, home and community-based experiences

which prepare student's to assume adult roles in many settings. The lesson plans were developed in classrooms and have been extensively field-tested and found to be effective. As such, the LCCE curriculum provides a powerful, readily achievable and comprehensive means of teaching skills related to self-determination for youth with disabilities. The remaining portion of the chapter will discuss how to accomplish this.

Using the LCCE to Promote Self-Determination

Applying the LCCE curriculum to enhance skills related to self-determination involves the use of 17 subcompetencies in 4 competency areas. All of the competencies are contained within the Personal and Social Skills Domain area, and materials to be discussed can implemented by purchasing these materials. The subcompetency areas (listed in Table 1) consist of almost 350 lesson plans. The previous chapters in this guide discuss the LCCE system and describe the lesson plans.

As suggested by the flow in Table 1, lesson plans pertaining to the LCCE self-determination instruction are intended to be used sequentially, beginning with Competency 10 through Competency 15. This sequence begins with instruction in issues of self-awareness. When students acquire a broader sense of themselves, they learn to apply that to building a positive self-confidence. Following this, they learn skills related to choice and decision-making, goal setting, organization and assuming greater responsibilities for occupational and other decisions. These areas are viewed as critical to a successful transition from student to adult roles and should be incorporated as part of the student's transition service planning. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that a student's educational plan include transition services no later than the age of 16. The LCCE lesson plans are a comprehensive treatment of self-determination and instruction should begin no later than age 16 and preferably by ages 12 to 14. A student could begin receiving instruction related to self-awareness when he or she enters Middle School or Junior High School and the LCCE lesson plans could provide the framework for instruction in self-determination skills through the student's senior high years. The LCCE is designed to be infused into existing curricular strategies, to augment similar instructional emphasis, such as social skills instruction, and provides the opportunity to introduce self-determination instruction into curricular areas such as social studies, vocational classes or occupational and vocational awareness courses.

Each lesson plan includes objectives which could be adopted as short term goals, while competency and subcompetency areas include objectives which can be used as long term goals. Although The Arc believes that students with disabilities need to be included in regular classrooms with their same-age peers without disabilities, we recognize that

many students with disabilities continue to receive their education in a variety of settings. The Arc's self-determination project has field-tested these materials with students receiving their education in a wide range of settings, including separate classrooms, resource rooms and regular classrooms. Like any material, the lesson plans will need refinement according to individual student circumstances. Likewise, students with a variety of educational diagnoses have been involved in the project, including students with mild and moderate levels of mental retardation, learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders. Indeed, because the attitudes and abilities related to self-determination are critical to all children and youth, several districts with whom The Arc has worked have used the LCCE materials to teach students without disabilities these skills.

Although the intent of this chapter is to describe the process which teachers and administrators could use to apply the LCCE to promote self-determination, it seems appropriate to briefly describe the focus of the various subcompetencies. Initial instructional focus involves the identification of basic physical and psychological needs, interests and abilities. Given IDEA's emphasis on basing transition services on individual student interests and preferences, theses lessons are particularly important. Students learn to distinguish between their physical and psychological needs and then learn ways to meet these needs. They use role playing and brainstorming procedures to explore abilities and interests, including those common to most people and those unique to themselves. Students then discuss common emotions, such as fear, love, hate and sadness, how these emotions affect their behavior and the behavior of others and how to cope with these emotions. Students then move from the emotional domain to basic physical awareness. The lesson plans involved in demonstrating a knowledge of one's physical self strive to help students to learn how their physical health impacts the ways they act. Students need to learn that there are physical causes to the way they feel, physically, and that how they feel impacts the way they behave. These lesson plans may be particularly difficult for students with more significant levels of disability, including mental retardation, and teachers will need to modify or adapt the learning process to meet the student's individual learning style. This is an oppurtune time to import additional materials involving health and body systems. The final subcompetency involving self-awareness is actually located in competency 14 and involves demonstrating how one's behavior effects others around us. The lesson plans provide a logical wrap up to the issues explored earlier, including appropriate ways to act in a variety of situations, and how to use cues to regulate one's behavior.

Following the self-awareness activities, students begin a series of lesson plans focusing on applying self-awareness to acquiring self-confidence. These lessons start by teaching students to express feelings of self-worth. They identify their own positive physical and psychological attributes, how these make them feel positive and how other peoples' actions affect their feeling of self-worth. Students move on to explore others' perception of them, listing potential reactions of others, constructing a personal view of how others see them, and describing how their behavior impacts others' reactions. As a component of this process, students discuss differences among people, including interests and abilities. Students then learn to give and accept praise and criticism. They learn appropriate and inappropriate ways to respond to each of these, list the effects and purpose of praise and criticism, and practice strategies to give and receive both. Finally, student identify their own positive characteristics, learn ways to express confidence in themselves, learn how to react to others expressions of confidence and learn appropriate ways to make positive statements about themselves.

The Arc's LCCE self-determination efforts intermingled subcompetencies from the final two competency areas (14 and 15). Efforts to increase choice and decision-making skills focused on three subcompetencies from Competency 15 (#'s 62, 63 and 64). The first of these (locating and utilizing sources of assistance) teaches students to identify situations where advice might be needed, how to identify resources in the community, exploring resources available for resolving problems, and listing positive and negative outcomes of seeking advice. This is followed by instruction relating to the identification and anticipation of consequences. Students discuss issues of cause and effect, learn vocabulary words related to decision-making and learn critical steps in decision making. They identify important decisions which adults make in vocational and avocational situations, and learn a process of analyzing risk in selecting alternatives to decisions. Students learn to identify and set goals, and practice decision making in various settings. The final subcompetency under the Choice and Decision-making area involves further refining the development and evaluation of alternatives. Again, students learn vocabulary words related to this process, revisit goal setting and identify personal goals across several areas of life. They learn to negotiate and compromise, how to identify and explore resources for developing alternatives and apply these skills to various career choices and decision-making.

Equipped with the necessary problem-solving and decision-making skills, students next address issues of self-actualization. They apply their self-awareness and self-confidence to become aware of their personal growth, identify strengths, weaknesses and values and apply these to setting specific goals. Students learn to make a plan of action

to accomplish these goals, explore how others will influence their attempts toward this end, and identify resources and organizations which can assist them in achieving these goals. The students then focus on self-organization, learning time management skills and applying these to realistic settings and activities. These first two subcompetency areas come from Competency 14. The final two subcompetency areas are drawn from Competency 15. These involve recognizing the nature of a problem and developing goal seeking behavior. Students again apply what they learned from earlier competency areas to identify situations and problems specific to their interests, abilities and values. They use previously acquired problem-solving skills to solve problems they identify in meeting the goals set in the first two subcompetency areas in this domain. Finally, students explore in greater detail the goals they have identified, learn more specifics about goal setting and apply these to writing and achieving individual goals.

The Arc's self-determination project sought to emphasize the "core" elements of self-determination. We believe that the 17 subcompetencies identified provide the essential instruction in self-determination. This allows teachers and schools to purchase materials in one of the three LCCE domain areas and apply those to promoting self-determination. However, if materials from the other two domain areas are available, the teacher can augment the above listed core elements with instruction in closely related areas. In Competency 7 (Exhibiting responsible citizenship) there are several lesson plans involving the knowledge about the law and government as well as citizen rights and responsibilities. These lesson plans provide a comprehensive treatment of a visible aspect of self-advocacy. Self-advocacy involves literally advocating for yourself or for others who share similar concerns. In order to accomplish this, it becomes important to learn what rights one has and how government works at all levels. This may be as simple as voting or as complex as engaging in advocacy efforts to change systems or correct perceived injustices.

Lesson plans from Subcompetency 34 (Choosing and Planning activities related to recreation and leisure) can be included in the Choice and Decision-making lesson activities. Lesson plans from Competency 9 (getting around the community) can be included in instruction related to achieving individual goals and objectives or identifying community resources. In fact, because self-determination reflects having choice and control in one's life, virtually any behavior can be seen as self-determining and a wide number of lesson plans could be included which meet individual student needs. For a student with moderate levels of mental retardation, an expression of self-determination be managing his or her own money and instruction from Competency 1 (Managing personal finances) could be included. Finally, lesson plans from the final domain area,

Occupational Guidance and Preparation, provide valuable supplements to the self-determination efforts.

In short, by using the LCCE materials in their entirety, one could construct a personalized, specific and comprehensive effort to promote self-determination. The critical elements, however, are those identified above. A student acquiring these attitudes and abilities will be able to apply a host of learned behaviors to become autonomous, self-regulating and self-actualizing. Without these attitudes and abilities, students will likely not apply their money management or occupational skills to meet self-selected goals, solve problems and achieve self-determination. The LCCE provides, in our estimation, the most comprehensive, exhaustive treatment of self-determination available today.

Assessing student self-determination needs

Another strength of the LCCE system is that it provides the teacher the means to determine student knowledge and performance levels for each of the competencies and subcompetencies and to individualize instruction according to these levels. The use of the LCCE Knowledge and Performance Batteries is addressed in previous chapters and teachers can use these assessments to determine student knowledge and performance regarding the competencies related to self-determination. An additional assessment area which is important to understanding student self-determination is the degree to which the individual student perceives him or herself to be self-determining. Student perceptions of control and beliefs about their effectiveness, competence and worth are integral to understanding the degree to which they are self-determining. To this end, we have developed and field-tested a self-report measure of self-determination which is tied directly to the four domain areas listed in Table 1. This scale, the LCCE Self-Determination Scale, is a 60-question scale asking the student to respond to statements about self-determination.

References

Accreditation Council on Services for People with Disabilities (ACDD), (1991). Enhancing the rights of people with developmental disabilities. Landover, MD: ACDD.

Butler-Nalin, P. (1989). The effects of school characteristics and program participation on special education dropouts (Contract No. 300-87-0054). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Campeau, P., Wolman, J. & Mithaug, D. (1992). Research on self-determination in individuals with disabilities. A proposal submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

deCharmes, R. (1984). Maximizing motivation in educational settings. In R. Ames & C. Ames (Eds.), Research on Motivation in Education, Volume 1: Student Motivation. New York: Academic Press.

Deci, E.L. & Chandler, C.L. (1986). The importance of motivation for the future of the LD field. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 19, 587 - 594.

Gresham, F.M. (1984). Social skills and self-efficacy for exceptional children. Exceptional Children, 79, 417 - 423.

Halloran, W. & Henderson, D.R. (1990). Transition issues for the 1990's. Institute on Community Integration Impact: Feature issue on Transition, 3(3), pp. 2 - 3.

Hasazi, S.B., Gordon, L.R., & Roe, C.A. (1985). Factors associated with employment status of handicapped youth exiting high school from 1979-1983. Exceptional Children, 51, 455 - 469.

Houghton, J., Bronicki, G.J.B., Guess, D. (1987). Opportunities to express preferences and make choices among students with severe disabilities in classroom settings. The Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 12, 18 - 27.

Ianacone, R.N. & Stodden, R.B. (1987). Transition issues and directions for individuals who are mentally retarded. In R.N. Ianacone & R.A. Stodden (Eds.), Transition Issues and Directions. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

Kochhar, C. A. & Deschamps, A.B. (1992). Policy crossroads in preserving the right of passage to independence for learners with special needs. Journal of Vocational Special Needs Education, 14, 9 - 19.

Lipsky, D.K. & Gardner, A. (Eds.) (1985). Beyond Separate Education: Quality Education for All. Baltimore: Paul Brookes Publishing Co.

Mithaug, D.E., Horiuchi, C.N., & Fanning, P.N. (1985). A report on the Colorado statewide follow-up survey of special education students. Exceptional Children, 51, 397 - 404.

Murtaugh, M. & Zettin, A.G. (1990). The development of autonomy among learning handicapped and nonhandicapped adolescents: A longitudinal perspective. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 19, 245 - 255.

Neel, S.R., Meadows, N., Levine, P., & Edgar, E.B. (1988). What happens after special education: A statewide follow-up study of secondary students who have behavioral disorders. Behavioral Disorders, 13(3), 209 - 216.

Nirje, B. (1972). The right to self-determination. In W. Wolfenberger (Ed.), Normalization. Toronto, Canada: National Institute on Mental Retardation.

Office of Special Education Programs (1992). A vision of a totally integrated lifestyle. A draft discussion paper prepared by the U.S. Department of Eduction Office of Special Education Programs, Washington, D.C.

Ryan, R.M., Connell, J.P. & Deci, E.L. (1985). A motivational analysis of self-determination and self-regulation in education. In C. Ames & R. Ames (Eds.), Research on motivation in education, Volume 2: The classroom mileau (pp. 13 - 51). New York: Academic Press.

Turnbull, A.P.& Turnbull, H.R. (1985). Developing independence. Journal of Adolescent Health Care, 6, 108 - 119.

Wagner, M. (1989). Influences on the transition experiences of youth with disabilities. A report from the national transition study. Paper presented at the meeting of the Division of Research, Council for Exceptional Children conference, San Francisco, CA.

Ward, M.J. (1988). The many facets of self-determination. National Information Center for Children and Youth with Handicaps: Transition Summary, 5, 2 - 3.

Ward, M.J., Wehmeyer, M.L, Martin, J.E. & Marshall, L.H. (1993). Student involvement in transition planning: Fulfilling the intent of IDEA. A manuscript submitted to Career Development for Exceptional Individuals.

Wehmeyer, M.L. (1992a). Self-determination and the education of students with mental retardation. Education and Training in Mental Retardation, 27, 302 - 314..

Wehmeyer, M.L. (1992b). Self-determination: Critical skills for outcome-oriented transition services. The Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 15, 3 - 9.

Wehmeyer, M.L. & Berkobien, R. (1991). Self-determination and self-advocacy: A case of mistaken identity. TASH Newsletter, 17(7), 4.

Williams, R.R. (1989). Creating a new world of opportunity: Expanding choice and self-determination in lives of Americans with severe disability by 1992 and beyond. In R. Perske (Ed.), Proceedings from the National Conference on Self-Determination. Minneapolis: Institute on Community Integration.